

CLAIMS:

1. A scouring material comprising:
a three-dimensional non-woven web of entangled fibres bonded to one another at their
mutual contact points by a pre-bond resin, wherein a majority by weight of the fibres
comprise natural fibres, and the bonded web has a maximum density of 50 kg/m³;
and a plurality of abrasive particles adhered to the fibres of the bonded web by a make-
coat resin.
2. A scouring material as claimed in claim 1, wherein the bonded web has a maximum
density of 30 kg/m³.
3. A scouring material as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the bonded web has a
minimum thickness of 5 mm.
4. A scouring material as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which at least
80% by weight of the fibres comprise natural fibres.
5. A scouring material as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which all of the
fibres comprise natural fibres.
6. A scouring material as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which the natural
fibres are natural vegetable fibres.
7. A scouring material as claimed in claim 6, in which the natural fibres comprise coco,
sisal and/or hemp fibres.
8. A scouring material as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which the pre-
bond resin is a thermosetting or a thermoplastic resin.

9. A scouring material as claimed in claim 8, in which the pre-bond resin is an epoxy resin or a co-polyamide resin.

10. A scouring material as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which the make-coat resin is a latex or a phenolic resin.

11. A scouring material as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which the abrasive particles comprise an inorganic material and have an average particle size of about 50 microns.

12. A scouring material as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 10, in which the abrasive particles comprise a polymeric material or a natural material.

13. A scouring material as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which the non-woven web is a dry-laid web.

14. A hand-held scouring pad formed from a material as claimed in any one of the preceding claims.

15. A method of making a scouring material as claimed in claim 1, comprising the steps of

- (i) forming a three-dimensional nonwoven web of natural fibres contacted with dry particulate material that includes fusible binder particles;
- (ii) exposing the web to conditions that cause the binder particles to form a flowable liquid binder, and then solidifying the liquid binder to form bonds between the fibres of the web and thereby provide a pre-bonded web; and
- (iii) applying abrasive particles to the pre-bonded web, and bonding the abrasive particles to the fibres of the pre-bonded web by at least a make-coat resin to provide the scouring material.

16. A method as claimed in claim 15, in which the binder particles are applied to the web without applying a compressive force to the web.

17. A method as claimed in claim 15 or claim 16, in which the binder particles are deposited across the whole thickness of the web under the action of an electrostatic force.

5 18. A method as claimed in any one of claims 15 to 17, in which an electrostatic charge is applied to the binder particles, which are then directed towards the web while the latter is located in an electrically-grounded support surface.

19. A method as claimed in any one of claims 15 to 18, in which the abrasive particles and the make-coat resin are applied to the pre-bonded web together as a slurry.

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20. A method as claimed in claim 19, in which the slurry is sprayed onto the pre-bonded web.